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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: May 8, 1953

SUBJECT: Guatemalan Attitude toward OAS

PARTICIPANTS: Dr. Alberto Lleras, Secretary General of OAS

ARA - Ambassador Dreier

COPIES TO: ARA - Mr. Cabot
Mr. Mann
MID - Mr. Leddy
Mr. Fisher
AR - Mr. Powdler

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Dr. Lleras mentioned to me this morning the extraordinary statement of the Guatemalan Foreign Minister that Guatemala was not bound by the OAS Charter. He said he was particularly surprised at this statement in view of the following.

Just before the last meeting of the Council, which took place on May 6, Ambassador Toriello had come to see Dr. Lleras for the first time since he had taken his place on the Council obviously for the purpose of finding out what was going to happen as a result of the Salvadoran initiative in circulating copies of the exchange of notes between Guatemala and El Salvador among members of the Council. During this conversation Toriello had explained to Dr. Lleras that the only reason they had not taken the matter of their complaint against the other Central American states up before the OAS was out of consideration for the OAS. The Guatemalan Government, he said, felt it would provoke a useless discussion in the OAS and that it was not desirable for member states to submit matters there unless they intended to request some action, which the Guatemalan government did not intend. Specifically, the Guatemalans did not consider the matter a controversy calling for any action of a multilateral character.

Toriello went on to say that the Guatemalan government, far from pulling away from the OAS, intended to promote even relations. In this connection, he intimated that he personally had recommended that the Guatemalan government appoint a special representative to the OAS, since he was not able to devote sufficient

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time to it. Furthermore, in answer to Dr. Lleras' question, Toriello had suggested the possibility that the Guatemalan government might revise its reservation to the Charter of OAS in such a way as to accomodate the views expressed by other governments which had so far refused to accept it without some clarification.

The recent statement of the Foreign Minister would appear to be somewhat inconsistent with the views expressed to Dr. Lleras. by Ambassador Toriello.

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ARA:JCDreier:ch

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